

On the Day After Christmas

OUR word Santa Claus is a corruption of the Dutch San Nicolaas, and the story of the original saint from whom the name and the custom come is told in the Encyclopedia Britannica as follows: "St. Nicholas, bishop of Myra, in Lycia, a saint honored by the Greeks and the Latins on Dec. 6."

"His cult is as celebrated as his history is obscure. All the accounts that have come down to us are of a purely legendary character, and it is impossible to find any single incident confirmed historically."

"The main facts of his life are usually given as follows: He was bishop of Myra at the time of the Emperor Diocletian, was persecuted, tortured for the faith and kept in prison until the more tolerant reign of Constantine and was present at the council of Nicea."

"It should be observed that this last circumstance is ignored by all historians; and that St. Athanasius, who knew all the notable bishops of the period, never mentions Nicholas, bishop of Myra. The oldest known monument of the cult of St. Nicholas seems to be the Church of Sts. Priscus and Nicholas built at Constantinople by the Emperor Justinian. In the west the name of St. Nicholas appears in the ninth century records of the martyrs, and churches dedicated to him are to be found at the beginning of the eleventh century. It is more especially, however, from the time of the removal of his body to Bari, in Apulia, that his cult became popular."

"The inhabitants of Bari organized an expedition, seized his remains by means of a ruse and transported them to Bari, where they were received in triumph on the 9th of May, 1087, and where the foundations were laid for a new basilica in his honor. This was the origin of a famous and still popular pilgrimage. There are nearly 400 churches in England dedicated to St. Nicholas. He is the patron saint of Russia, the special protector of children, scholars, merchants and sailors."

"In art St. Nicholas is represented with various attributes, being most commonly depicted with three children standing in a tub by his side. Of the various interpretations of this none is absolutely certain."

"One explanation has been sought in the legend of St. Nicholas miraculously restoring to life three rich youths who had been murdered, cut up and concealed in a salting tub by a thievish innkeeper or butcher in whose house they had taken lodging."

"A legend of his surreptitious bestowal of dowries upon the three daughters of an impoverished citizen who, unable to procure fit marriages for them, was about to sell them is said to have originated the old custom of giving presents in secret on the eve of St. Nicholas, subsequently transferred to Christmas day."

"Hence the association of Christmas with 'Santa Claus,' an American corruption of the Dutch form 'San Nicolaas,' the custom being brought to America by the early Dutch colonists."

While Shepherds Watch'd

While shepherds watch'd their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

"Fear not," said he, for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind;
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind."

"To you in David's town this day
Is born of David's line
The Saviour, who is Christ the Lord,
And this shall be the sign:

"The heavenly Babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands
And in a manger laid."

Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:

"All glory be to God on high
And to the earth be peace,
Good will henceforth from heaven
To men
Begin and never cease."

—Nahum Tate.

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PREPAREDNESS.

Secretary Daniels has just awarded contracts for \$65,000,000 worth of new battleships and more contracts will be let. Sixty-five million dollars may not seem many to an ordinary man, but to a newspaper plodder they look like a great many. It seems to be the theory that we must build battle ships no matter whether we need them or not. That we must be gun toters, so to speak. If an individual carries a pistol he is put on the roads, but Uncle Sam can tote one. He says he might be attacked by a "furrin" nation—but why not, by the same token, allow the individual to claim that he might be attacked by some "furriner" in this nation? Looks like the same logic should apply.

However, we have seen enough of submarines; we know enough of the uncertainties of life to know that any moment we may find ourselves in war. Therefore we should invest, and invest heavily in all kinds of defense. Mr. Bryan claimed, and it looked good that if we carried a gun we were liable to use it, whereas, if we had no gun of course we couldn't shoot. But if the other fellow has a gun and attacks us, we are in a bad fix.

The building of battle ships doesn't destroy any money. It simply takes it and uses it for a few months and the some money is again doing chores. Nothing is tied up in the operation. The sixty-five million dollars to be expended in this last contract means that much money given to workmen. The people give it up to Uncle Sam and Uncle Sam hands it back to them. Not, perhaps, the same people, but the money is still at home, still in circulation, and we all can have a chance at it. If to build battle ships meant to take millions of our circulating medium and retire it, lose it, then one might object. But it doesn't. It simply means that Uncle Sam passes the hat, takes up a collection, uses the money for a few days and then turns it loose.

And who can really object to that?

We hope that America will some day soon have a navy equal to any in the world. We hope that all school children will be given military training. We hope that we may never have war—but we would like to see America prepared to have it if any foreign nation attempted to monkey with our dignity.—Everything.

RUSSIA AND CONSTANTINOPLE.

Though it has been assumed that if the Allies are victorious Russia will get Constantinople the straits, the first official word as far as the public is concerned is Premier Trepoff's recent announcement in the Duma that a definite arrangement to that effect was concluded with England and France in 1915 and later was approved by Italy.

Constantinople with a free outlet to the open sea has been for centuries the dream and goal of Russian statesmanship. Necessity no less than ambition spurred these wishes on. The development of the Empire's resources, the expansion of its commerce, the security of its vital interests in times of war all demand a port on southern waters. The lack of such an outlet has been one of Russia's gravest handicaps in the present struggle. Her only means of sea communication with her allies has been the far-northern port of Archangel, which frozen a greater part of the year; Vladivostok, on the Pacific, is five thousand miles from the country's western frontier. Russia accordingly regards the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles as keys to her destiny.

In former plans to obtain them, her great obstacle has been England, who looked upon Russia as a dangerous rival in the East and the one Power above all others which British interests could not afford to see established at Constantinople. Years ago, however, those apprehensions lightened or at least became less talked of; and early in the present war England along with France realized that the

question was no longer "whether Constantinople and the straits should be come Russian or remain Turkish, but whether they should become Russian or remain German." The interests of England and France no less than of Russia were menaced by the Berlin to Bagdad railroad and its accompanying plans for a Teuton sweep into the East. Russia's need and Britain's security thus became interdependent instead of hostile as they once had seemed, and consent to Russian control at Constantinople in the event of Allied victory was readily forthcoming.—Atlanta Journal.

Not a Heavy Eater.—Mrs. Athomeday—"Mr. Athomeday has no bad habits whatsoever. He never drinks, and he spends all his evenings at home. Why he doesn't even belong to the American Club."

Mrs. Clymer.—"Does he smoke?"
Mrs. Athomeday—"Only in moderation. He likes a cigar after he has had a good dinner, but I don't suppose he smokes two cigars a month."—The Times of Cuba.

Unnecessary.—The town council of a small Scotch community met to inspect a site for a new hall. They assembled at a chapel, and as it was a warm day a member suggested that they should leave their coats there.

"Some one can stay behind and watch them," suggested another.

"What for?" demanded a third. "If we are all going out together, what need is there for any one to watch the clothes?"—Tit-Bits.

Too Delicate.—A man traveling in Maine met a middle-aged farmer, who said his father, ninety years old, was still on the farm where he was born. "Ninety years old, eh?" "Yes, pop is close to ninety." "Is his health good?" "Taint much now. He's been complainin' for months back." "I dunno; sometimes I think farmin' don't agree with him."—Western Christian Advocate.

ALCOHOL FOR GASOLINE.

Henry Ford shows his vision in practical matters of vast moment when he bids his countrymen be ready for fuel alcohol to replace gasoline.

Petroleum is among those gifts of nature which threaten to become exhausted or greatly enhanced in price. Elderly Americans think of Pennsylvania as the "oil state." It is eighth in the list. California yields one quarter of the world supply, followed by Oklahoma, Illinois, Texas and Louisiana; but Russia leads all our states but one, Mexico all but three, so rapidly new fields developed.

Anthracite coal also is a vanishing quantity, but most of the race uses soft coal, and our seaboard can learn to do so. Gasoline has no such sister substitute. It will not help matters much to fit motors, as during the war Germany has done, for petroleum. Having few oil wells of her own, Germany has also made great progress with fuel alcohol chiefly from a variety of potatoes.

We shall no doubt some day follow suit, in spite of the profusion, until now, of mineral oil. And we cannot continue making denatured alcohol from wood. A supply from annual cropping with earth fertility restored by nitrates caught from the air by cheap water power, may be the best solution science offers for the fluid-fuel problem.—New York World.

True love, in any man, is the essence of unselfishness—and the most selfish thing in the world.

True love, in the cave man, is expressed by a desire to beat a woman and to pull her around by the hair.

True love, in an author, is demonstrated by his self-restraint in refusing to make "copy" out of a love affair.

LOST.—On Monday a black handbag containing \$3.00 in money and pair of nose glasses. Reward if returned to M. L. Whitley. 12-14-1tp

BAPTIST WILL MEET NEXT YEAR IN DURHAM.

convention, held at Elizabeth City, which closed Friday noon, though not so largely attended as others, with only 345 delegates, will go down in history as one of its very best sessions—yes, an epoch-making session.

It meets next year in Durham. Rev. Bruce Benton, of Rockingham, was appointed to preach the convention sermon, or his alternate, Rev. R. A. McFarland, of Scotland Neck. The entertainment will be on the Harvard plan as for the past two years.

A movement was launched by which the Baptist hosts of the state are to gird their loins for a great educational campaign, to be under the direction of the board of education, the trustees of Wake Forest, Meredith and Chowan colleges, and one representative from each of the high schools, together with Walter N. Johnson, Raleigh; B. C. Henning, Elizabeth City; D. L. Gore, Wilmington; W. M. Vines, Charlotte, and W. H. Weatherspoon, Laurinburg. It is considered the most important action of the convention.

Missions, in its various phases, was the theme of all the discussions of the last day's session. Dr. J. T. Love, of Richmond, corresponding secretary of the foreign mission board, spoke on the supreme necessity of Baptists greatly enlarging their mission program. Dr. T. W. O'Kelly, of Raleigh, was elected state vice-president of the foreign mission board.

Dr. Louis B. Warren, of Atlanta, represented the home mission board. The convention adopted the recommendation of the board of missions that it lay out its work for next year on a basis of \$140,000, to be raised by April 30, 1917. Of this amount, \$55,000 is for foreign missions, \$37,500 is for home missions and \$47,500 for state missions. The board was also authorized to reorganize its office force so that complete systematic records of all contributions can be kept.

THE EIGHT HOUR LAW.

To the Editor:—

'Ex-President Taft scored union labor in an address at Providence, R. I., December 1, 1916 and right now while the eight hour law is before the Supreme court of the United States it would be well for labor and the people to draw some parallels as the chief position to this labor law comes from the Republican elements in politics, let us see what Lincoln says about the Supreme court of the United States, the supposed father of the present Republican party.

In his first annual address to the United States Senate Lincoln said: "This rule of a minority as a permanent argument is wholly inadmissible. I do not forget the position assumed by some that constitutional questions are to be decided by the Supreme court nor do I deny that such decisions must be binding in any case upon the parties to a suit as to the object of that suit. At the same time the candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the government upon vital questions affecting the whole people is to be irrevocably fixed by the decision of the Supreme court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties in personal action, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their government to the hands of that eminent tribunal nor is there in this view any assault upon that court or the judges."

Mr. Taft said: "The danger to American economic strength through the tendency of union labor to place itself above law and order is one big cloud on our horizon. When we look to the days to follow the world conflict, the highest tribunal in the nation has been notified that unless the Adamson law is upheld the threatened railroad strike will be enforced. It is a threat to starve the nation into submission. The decision resulting may be the proper one, but the means contemplated are wholly wrong. If we have a railroad strike, all forces of public opinion and public action must be called into play to force obedience."

Herein Mr. Taft strays far from what is the true highest tribunal of the nation. Congress is the highest tribunal and from failure after failure before the Supreme court, the child of the creation of a political brain in later years, labor has appealed to Congress and now capital appeals from that highest tribunal back to the Supreme court.

Here what the President that is said to have saved the Union said, in his first annual address to Congress, December 3, 1861: "In my present position, I could scarcely be justified were I to omit raising a warning voice against this approach of returning despotism. It is the effort to place capital on an equal footing with, if not above, labor in the structure of the government. Labor is prior to and independent of capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is superior to capital and deserves much higher consideration. No man living is more worthy to be trusted than those who toil up from poverty; none less inclined to take or touch ought which they have not honestly earned. Let them beware of surrendering a political power which they already possess and which if surrendered will surely be used to close the door of advancement against such as they and to fix new disabilities and burdens upon them until all liberty shall be lost."

The fulfillment of this prophecy by the Republican party laid the foundation corner stone of the necessity of the organization of labor for its protection, and politically speaking, it represents 75% of the voting population of the nation.

Mr. Wilson says his chief ambition was to close the widening breach between capital and labor and the classes and the masses. So the people should study a parallel of ex-President Taft's, Roosevelt's, Hughes' and Lincoln's views.

Respectfully,

S. A. JONES.
Waynesville, N. C.